Subject: U.S. 1804 dollar

Writer: Barnes, Paul R.

McCann, Erickson, Inc.

[285 Madison Ave]

1931

December 16th, 1931.

American Numismatic Society
156th St. and Broadway
New York City

Gentlemen:-

I would be greatly indebted to you if you could give me the history of the 1804 Silver Dollar, known in numismatic cirlcles as "the King of American rarities".

I understand that it was not a regular issue - just some few struck off for some reason or other.

Could you tell me how many were made, issued (if any), and now accounted for? Also the value (I have heard the price of $5,000 put on one)? And any further bits of information anent this much-sought-after coin.

I enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for your use.

I thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Paul R. Barnes

Paul R. Barnes
McCann-Erickson, Inc.
285 Madison Avenue
New York City

December 17, 1931.

Mr. Paul R. Barnes
McCann-Erickson, Inc.
285 Madison Avenue
New York City.

Dear Sir:

The writer has made some study of the 1804 dollar and the following are his own personal conclusions. Although the mint states dollars were made in 1804, that does not necessarily mean that dollars made in that year were dated 1804, as we have repeated evidences that dies were used in the early days until worn out. Mint records show that dollars were made in 1805 as well, also a study of mint records shows that they were not so much concerned in keeping records of the pieces struck as in records of the number of pieces sent out from the mint.

No dollars bearing the date of 1804 were known until about 1840 and it is known that one or two dollars from 1804 dies were struck at about that time. The dies were in existence until after 1877. In that year a few dollars bearing the date 1804 were struck and some little scandal was caused by the striking of these and the dies were destroyed. We have records of some seventeen or eighteen dollars bearing this date.

The first dollar bearing the date 1804 was brought back from Philadelphia by Mathew Stickney of Salem, Massachusetts, who got it at the mint in trade for a coin that he had. A friend of mine, a boy at that time, who lived in Salem, told me that Mathew Stickney told him that this dollar had been recently made. The Stickney dollar brought a number of years ago, I think, $3,200.00. Others have been sold since for less than $1,000.00. I could not tell you whether the price of $5,000.00 has ever been offered. It is easy enough to put a price and another think to sell it for that price. I trust this gives you the information you desire.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator